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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 03 NAIROBI 002214

SIPDIS

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SUBJECT: SOMALIA-LOCAL INITIATIVES OFFER TFG OPPORTUNITIES  
FOR SUCCESS

Classified By: Somalia Unit Counselor Bob Patterson for reasons 1.4(b)  
and (d)

11. (C) Summary: Increasing momentum behind local and regional governance initiatives in south-central Somalia offers the TFG an opportunity to broaden its support base and further marginalize al-Shabaab. Multiple contacts tell us efforts are underway in the regions to confront al-Shabaab and bolster or establish local and regional administrations that are largely autonomous, but linked to the TFG. The TFG, however, does not speak with one voice regarding outreach to the regions. We have many times talked to MPs in Hiraan, Lower Juba, Galgaduud, and Galmaduug who appear relatively latched up with local efforts and opinion. However, multiple contacts tell us a core group of ministers, are actively working to sabotage decentralization, as called for in the Djibouti process and the TFG charter, in order to maintain the status quo of self-enrichment at the top. We think the TFG has the opportunity to increase its credibility through politically supporting these processes, which are likely to continue with or without the TFG, rather than attempting to resist them. Direct USG support to regional initiatives that pledge support to the TFG, or support to the TFG that is earmarked for specific local and regional initiatives would be one way of catalyzing this process. In addition, President Sharif and Prime Minister Sharmarke need to form a cabinet that can shore up support in the regions. End Summary.

12. (C) The central Somali region of Galmudug, following a two year self-initiated and funded reconciliation process that in 2006 led to the creation of the Galmudug administration, has in recent weeks sought support from UNDP and the NGO Interpeace to continue reconciliation and local administration building efforts. UNDP, with Italian funds, is reportedly pursuing quick impact projects in the area. Contacts in the region tell us the Galmudug administration has remained resilient despite interruption by the Council of Islamic Courts (CIC) 2006 rise. The leadership structure of Galmudug consists of a 27 member Traditional Leadership Council, a 26 member Assembly of Representatives, a President, a Vice President, and a Council of Ministers. Galmudug President Allin, a Bare-era military colonel, on October 19 told Somalia Unit PolOff that Galmudug supports the Transitional Federal Charter and the TFG and wants to move forward on developing the Galmudug administration and establishment of a local police force. Allin said ASWJ is supportive of the Galmudug administration. ASWJ contacts from the area confirm they are working with Allin to provide security. ( Note: The TFG Prime Minister is mediating between two rivals who both claim to be the President of the Galmudug

administration. Multiple Galmudug contacts tell us they are optimistic the issue will be resolved. End note.)

13. (C) Hiraan MPs in mid-October presented the Somalia Unit with a proposal for support to local level reconciliation and evolving local administrations. Our contacts in Hiraan tell us the MP's proposal supports organic efforts in that region. Our contacts in Hiraan tell us, following multiple transfers of control of the Hiraan capital Beledweyne from TFG-aligned forces to al-Shabaab/Hisbul Islam militia, local elders and leaders in recent days succeeded in convincing Hisbul Isam forces to leave the town. TFG-aligned forces also remain outside of Beledweyne. In the tenuous physical and political space left between the two sides, local leaders are reportedly attempting to broker a clan truce. Contacts in Hiraan, to include MPs from the area, clan leaders, and TFG General Mukhtar tell us they think local level reconciliation and a TFG commitment to the idea of a Hiraan State will do much to undercut Hisbul Islam leader Ma'ow's messaging. Ma'ow, former governor of Hiraan, defected to Hisbul Islam and our contacts tell us he has been able to garner some degree of local support by convincing locals that the TFG is not interested in Hiraan. The Hiraan MPs told us they also want to integrate local sub-clan and ASWJ forces into a unified and local level police and security force for the region.

14. (C) Middle Shabelle traditional and clan leaders, with support from TFG MPs from the region, are seeking to establish a regional administration for that region. The Imaam over all of Middle Shabelle, local clan leaders, and

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Abgal clan ASWJ leaders have reportedly secured an agreement from the Abgal al-Shabaab governor of Jowhar that he will leave al-Shabaab and follow the clan imperative if they are successful in brokering a Middle Shabelle State. Intermediary for the Imaam, Ahmed Farah told Somalia Unit PolOff on October 21 that Middle Shabelle leaders, predominately Hawiye/Abgal, have the support of the region's MPs and think President Sharif will support them. Farah said development of Middle Shabelle would symbolically give the TFG more credibility because the TFG could claim an important region was under its "control" but would also indirectly support the TFG due to its status as the "breadbasket" of Somalia.

15. (C) While Lower Juba is a complex mosaic of competing interests, the forces currently fighting al-Shabaab in Lower Juba have gained support from clans in Lower Juba, according to multiple contacts, because the Darod/Kabalah hope success over al-Shabaab will translate into regional semi-autonomy. In recent months leaders from Lower Juba have many times met to discuss the composition of a would-be administration. Lower Juba leaders have formed a tenuous relationship with militia commander Ahmed Madobe who is attempting to push al-Shabaab from the port town of Kimsayo. Many Lower Juba contacts, to include an ugas of the Ogaden clan and Juba Resistance Movement Chairman tell us they think Madobe, in the event al-Shabaab is pushed from the region, will be contained by the wider clan imperative and agree to work with a local administration. (Note: This narrative leaves aside the important question of Darod/Marehan clan resistance to the notion of a Darod/Ogaden led Lower Juba but, nevertheless, highlights the range of opportunities and choices the TFG has regarding the regions. End note. )

6.(C) We have many times talked to MPs in Hiraan, Lower Juba, Galgaduud, and Galmaduug who advocate for these local efforts. In addition, a top assistant to the Prime Minister told us the PM supports local efforts in Galmaduug and views improved security in that region's capital Galcaio, a key nexus of historical Darod-Hawiye clan enmity, as integral to greater security for south-central Somalia. Regional contacts, TFG officials, and members of civil society, however, tell us a core group of ministers, to include Deputy Prime Minister Hassan, Minister of Fisheries Ibbi, and the

Minister of Interior Jurile are working to sabotage decentralization, as called for in the Djibouti process and the TFG charter, in order to maintain the status quo of self-enrichment at the top.

17. (C) For example, contacts tell us the TFG intends to appoint a member of the diaspora, without consulting the local community, as governor of Hiraan. Contacts across the regions have told us they were buoyed by the TFG-Puntland agreement which, among other things, called for TFG-Puntland cooperation on anti-piracy efforts and forward movement on the drafting of the federal constitution. However, Ministers Hassan and Ibbi, immediately after the TFG-Puntland agreement, met with the Djiboutian government to discuss possible anti-piracy cooperation with Djibouti. This move was widely viewed by Somalis as an intentional effort to anger Puntland President "Faroole" and undercut the TFG-Puntland agreement. (Note: The TFG-Puntland agreement stipulates the constitutional drafting committee will move from Nairobi to Garowe. TFG Minister for Constitutional and Federal Affairs on October 15 told us he expanded the committee from 15 to 30 members in order to bring in members from the ARS block of the TFG. The committee was initially set up during Abdullahi Yusuf's TFG and was not reconstituted after the Djibouti process. Mohamed said the committee plans to soon begin civic education on the constitutional process, starting in Puntland then moving toward south-central. End note.)

18. (C) Comment: The examples highlighted here are merely a sampling of local and regional initiatives currently in play in Somalia which have in common pledges of support for the TFG and the desire, to varying degrees, for local autonomy. We think the TFG has the opportunity to gain support from its would-be friends and increase its credibility through politically supporting these processes, which will likely continue with or without the TFG, rather than attempting to resist them. Direct USG support to regional initiatives that pledge support to the TFG or support to the TFG that is earmarked for specific local and regional initiatives would

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be one way of catalyzing this process. Against the backdrop of rumors Sharif intends to reshuffle his cabinet, we think President Sharif and Prime Minister Sharmarke should formulate a cabinet that will signal TFG willingness to shore up support in the regions. A new cabinet so composed would exclude or at least mitigate the influence of ministers such as Hassan, Ibbi, and Jurile, individuals who hide behind arguments that the TFG needs to be strong at the center in order to protect their own access to the TFG cash cow. End Comment.  
RANNEBERGER